Under-the-Table Work: A Form of Theft before God

In the Kingdom of God, justice is not an optional detail but a fundamental condition. It is not decorative, but essential—a visible expression of a transformed heart and a renewed life that lives in harmony with the character of God.

This way of life does not spring from religious obligation, but from the deep desire of a heart that hungers and thirsts after righteousness—a heart that longs for purity, truth, and light, and is not satisfied with appearances, but seeks to authentically reflect the holiness of God.

Righteousness is reflected in every aspect of life, including the way we respect the rights of others. Therefore, any gain obtained unjustly—whatever its form—constitutes a grave violation of the order established by God. It is not only the direct taking of an object, but any form of seizing what does not belong to us: material goods, money, opportunities, or advantages obtained unjustly.

The justice of God tolerates no compromise. He not only forbids theft, but also coveting what is not ours. To crave another's goods—whether material or social—is to contest the order and justice established by God. It is an offense against His holy character and evidence that the heart is not aligned with the righteousness of heaven.

To live in the righteousness of God means to be honest, a person of integrity, just, fair, impartial, and unwavering—even when no one sees, even when the situation would seem to allow a compromise. In the Kingdom of God, every choice matters, because it reflects who we are and to whom we belong.

In this light, off-the-books work is not merely a questionable economic practice, but lawlessness—a form of organized theft by which taxes are evaded and laws established for the common good are violated. Although widespread and often justified by personal need or lack of options, in God's eyes it remains iniquity.

By avoiding these contributions, society is deprived of the resources needed for education, healthcare, and social protection — especially for the elderly who have labored a lifetime. Fulfilling legal obligations is not merely a matter of social responsibility, but also an expression of love toward one's neighbor and of submission to the order established by God.

The apostle Paul speaks plainly: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever

therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." (Romans 13:1–2)

Therefore, working "off the books" or encouraging such practices means defying not only human law, but also God's divine order. The believer is called to live in the light, with integrity, even when others choose the path of compromise.

Scripture condemns without question the gain obtained through unjust means: "Rejoice not, O Israel… for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God, thou hast loved a (prostitute's) reward upon every cornfloor." (Hosea 9:1)

This rebuke to Israel highlights the seriousness of being attached to material gain obtained through compromise, at the expense of God's blessing. When a person loves dishonest profit, he turns away from the holiness God requires and from fellowship with Him, revealing the character of Balaam. Concerning Balaam, Scripture says he "loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2 Peter 2:15), showing that his thirst for gain blinded him and led him to choose iniquity — the path that ends in death. Those who love a dishonest reward follow the same way of destruction.

This truth is echoed in Jeremiah 2:33: "Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways." This verse shows that the one driven by greed — whether rich or poor — consciously shapes his behavior to sustain it, becoming ever more skilled in wrongdoing. "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith." (1 Timothy 6:10)

Hiding income, evading taxes, engaging in corruption, or manipulating others are all forms of lying and theft. They cannot be blessed by God and keep a person in a state of spiritual death, standing in direct contradiction to God's righteousness. Such practices do not merely break moral law — they contradict the holy character of God, who hates dishonest gain and calls His people to live in truth and justice.

Any form of gain obtained through deceit — whether tax evasion, corruption, or manipulation — is rebellion against the character of God. These are not mere administrative oversights or "adaptations to circumstance," but sins that separate us from Him.

God cannot declare clean the one who hides his income and uses unjust means for personal gain. Scripture is categorical: "Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?" (Micah 6:11)

This rhetorical question expresses divine indignation toward the hypocrisy of those who claim to be righteous but, when required to declare their earnings, use "false

measures” — a symbol of deceit and dishonest gain.

Tax theft may seem like financial gain, but in reality it brings no lasting benefit: “Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death.” (Proverbs 10:2) Such treasures offer no protection, no peace, and no life. Only righteousness — living in truth and justice — delivers.

Hiding income to avoid paying taxes, or collusion between employer and employee to obtain undeserved financial benefits — all these are forms of a “false balance.” God not only rejects these, He calls them an abomination — something deeply offensive to His holy and righteous nature: “A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.” (Proverbs 11:1)

God’s character is defined by justice, holiness, and truth. He not only executes justice, but loves it — and hates robbery. Isaiah 61:8 declares with solemn clarity: “For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrong…”

This hatred is not an emotional reaction, but an expression of His holy nature. God cannot be indifferent to evil, because evil is a direct offense against His character. Robbery — whether of goods, rights, or dignity — is active injustice, a violation of the moral order established by God.

Scripture warns without ambiguity in Ezekiel 18:10–13 that the one who robs will die: “…hath robbed, he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.” This sentence is not arbitrary, but just.

The gain of Achan: a cursed treasure. A striking example in Scripture is the sin of Achan, who hid stolen items in his tent — a garment, silver, and gold. Though Israel had just experienced a great victory at Jericho, God withdrew His presence from them because of this sin: “Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff.” (Joshua 7:11)

It was necessary for the sin to be exposed, confessed, and removed before God would resume His work among them. God will not dwell where sin reigns. This episode is a solemn warning: without a radical dealing with sin, there can be no true fellowship with God. Though Achan hid the stolen goods from human eyes, they were not hidden from God’s eyes. What was buried in his tent cried out to heaven.

This post is an excerpt from the booklet "Life Lived in the Righteousness of Christ", which you can read in full, free of charge. More studies and resources for spiritual awakening are available at https://www.unmodifiedword.com.